

**CLAIMS**

1. A method of enabling remote conferencing between conference participants, the method including the steps of:

5 providing a participant with at least one conferencing form containing information relating to a remote conferencing session and including coded data indicative of an identity of the conferencing form and of at least one reference point of the conferencing form;

10 receiving, in a computer system, indicating data from a sensing device operated by said conference participant involved in the conference session, said indicating data regarding the identity of the conferencing form and a position of the sensing device relative to the conferencing form, the sensing device, when placed in an operative position relative to the conferencing form, sensing the indicating data using at least some of the coded data;

15 identifying in the computer system and from the indicating data, at least one parameter relating to the conferencing session; and

providing at least one other conference participant remote from said conference participant with at least one conferencing form containing information representative of the at least one parameter.

20 2. The method of claim 1 in which said at least one parameter relating to the conferencing session is associated with at least one zone of the conferencing form, and in which the method includes identifying, in the computer system and from the zone relative to which the sensing device is located, said at least one parameter.

25 3. The method of claim 2 which includes

receiving, in the computer system, data regarding movement of the sensing device relative to the conferencing form, the sensing device sensing its movement relative to the conferencing form, using at least some of the coded data; and

identifying, in the computer system and from said movement being at least

partially within said at least one zone, said at least one parameter of the conferencing session.

4. A method of enabling remote conferencing between conference participants, the  
5 method including the steps of:

providing a participant with at least one conferencing form containing information relating to a remote conferencing session and including coded data indicative of at least one parameter of the remote conferencing session;

- 10 receiving, in a computer system, data from a sensing device operated by said conference participant regarding said at least one parameter and regarding movement of the sensing device relative to the conferencing form, the sensing device, when moved relative to the conferencing form, sensing the data regarding said at least one parameter using at least some of the coded data and generating the data regarding its own movement relative to the conferencing form;

- 15 interpreting, in the computer system, said movement of the sensing device as it relates to said at least one parameter; and

providing at least one other conference participant remote from said conference participant with at least one conferencing form containing information representative of the at least one parameter.

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5. The method of claim 1 or claim 4, in which the parameter is an action parameter of the remote conferencing session, the method including effecting, in the computer system, an operation in respect of the action parameter.

- 25 6. The method of claim 5, in which the action parameter of the remote conferencing session is selected from the group comprising:

sending an invitation to a conference session;

starting a conference session;

ending a conference session;  
viewing the history of a conference session;  
sending a message to a participant during a conference session;  
viewing messages sent during a conference session;  
5 ordering the printing of a palette of available line styles and colors;  
ordering the printing of a whiteboard page;  
updating a whiteboard page; and  
ordering the reprinting of a new whiteboard page.

10 7. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 in which the parameter is an option parameter of the remote conferencing session, the method including identifying, in the computer system, that the participant has entered a hand-drawn mark by means of a sensing device and effecting, in the computer system, an operation associated with the option parameter.

15 8. The method of claim 7 in which the option parameter is associated with at least one of:

an access level;  
a message recipient;  
a line style; and  
20 a line color.

9. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 in which the parameter is a text parameter of the remote conferencing session, the method including identifying, in the computer system, that the participant has entered handwritten text data by means of the sensing  
25 device and effecting, in the computer system, an operation associated with the text parameter.

10. The method of claim 9 which includes converting, in the computer system, the handwritten text data to computer text.

11. The method of claim 9 in which the text parameter is associated with at least one of:

a session description;

a conference start date;

a start time;

an end time;

a participant identification;

a conference session purpose;

a message subject\description; and

a message text.

12. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 in which the parameter is an authorization parameter of the remote conferencing session, the method including identifying, in the computer system, that the participant has entered a handwritten signature by means of the sensing device and effecting, in the computer system, an operation associated with the authorization parameter.

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13. The method of claim 12 which includes verifying, in the computer system, that the signature is that of the participant.

14. The method of claim 13 in which the authorization parameter is associated with updating a whiteboard page.

15. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 in which the parameter is a graphical

parameter of the remote conferencing session, the method including identifying, in the computer system, that the participant has entered hand-drawn graphical information by means of the sensing device and effecting, in the computer system, an operation associated with the graphical parameter.

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16. The method of claim 15 in which the graphical parameter is associated with a markup to a whiteboard page.

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17. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 in which at least one of the one or more conferencing forms contains information relating to at least one of:

booking a conference session;

cancelling a conference session;

controlling a conference session;

selecting invitees to a conference session;

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inviting participants to a conference session;

composing messages in a conference session;

sending messages in a conference session;

viewing messages in a conference session;

printing a palette of available line styles and colors in a conference session;

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selecting a line style and color in a conference session;

viewing the history of a conference session;

printing whiteboard pages;

updating whiteboard pages;

reprinting whiteboard pages;

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pasting content to whiteboard pages; and

ending a conference session.

18. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 which includes printing the conferencing form on demand.
- 5 19. The method of claim 18 which includes printing the conferencing form on a surface of a surface-defining means and, at the same time that the conferencing form is printed, printing the coded data on the surface.
- 10 20. The method of claim 19 which includes printing the coded data to be substantially invisible in the visible spectrum.
- 15 21. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 which includes retaining a retrievable record of each conferencing form generated, the conferencing form being retrievable using its identity as contained in its coded data.
22. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 which includes distributing a plurality of the conferencing forms using a mixture of multicast and pointcast communications protocols.
- 20 23. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 in which the sensing device contains an identification means which imparts a unique identity to the sensing device and identifies it as being associated with a particular conference participant and in which the method includes monitoring, in the computer system, said identity.
- 25 24. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 which includes providing all required information relating to the remote conferencing session on the at least one conferencing form, to eliminate the need for a separate display device.

25. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 in which the conferencing form is provided on multiple pages and in which the method includes binding the pages.

26. The method of claim 1 or claim 4 in which the conference participants are provided with telephone communication means for simultaneous use during the remote conferencing session.

27. A system for enabling remote conferencing between conference participants, the system including:

10 at least one conferencing form containing information relating to a remote conferencing session and including coded data indicative of an identity of the conferencing form and of at least one reference point of the conferencing form;

a computer system for receiving indicating data from a sensing device operated by a conference participant involved in the conference session; said indicating data  
15 regarding the identity of the conferencing form and a position of the sensing device relative to the conferencing form, the sensing device, when placed in an operative position relative to the conferencing form, sensing the indicating data using at least some of the coded data, said computer system including means for identifying, from the indicating data, at least one parameter relating to the conferencing session; and

20 means for providing at least one other conference participant remote from said conference participant with at least one conferencing form, containing information representative of the at least one parameter.

28. The system of claim 27 in which said at least one parameter relating to the conferencing session is associated with at least one zone of the conferencing form.

29. The system of claim 27 including the sensing device, the sensing device sensing its movement relative to the conferencing form, using at least some of the coded data.

30. A system for enabling remote conferencing between conference participants, the system including:

at least one conferencing form containing information relating to a remote conferencing session and including coded data indicative of at least one parameter of the remote conferencing session;

a computer system for receiving data from a sensing device operated by the conference participant involved in the conference session, said data regarding movement of the sensing device relative to the conferencing form, and for interpreting said movement of the sensing device as it relates to said at least one parameter, the sensing device, when moved relative to the conferencing form, sensing the data regarding said at least one parameter using at least some of the coded data, and generating the data regarding its own movement relative to the conferencing form; and

means for providing at least one other conference participant remote from the first conference participant with at least one conferencing form, containing information representative of the at least one parameter.

31. The system of claim 30 in which said at least one parameter relating to the conferencing session is associated with at least one zone of the conferencing form.

32. The system of claim 30 including the sensing device.

33. The system of claim 27 or claim 30 in which said at least one parameter of the conference session is selected from the group comprising an action parameter of the conference session, an option parameter of the conference session, a text parameter of the conference session, an authorization parameter of the conference session, and a graphical parameter of the conference session.

34. The system of claim 33 in which the action parameter of the conference session is selected from the group comprising:



sending an invitation to a conference session;

starting a conference session;

ending a conference session;

viewing the history of a conference session;

5 sending a message to a participant during a conference session;

viewing messages sent during a conference session;

ordering the printing of a palette of available line styles and colors;

ordering the printing of a new whiteboard page;

updating a whiteboard page; and

10 ordering the reprinting of a whiteboard page.

35. The system of claim 33 in which the option parameter is associated with at least one of:

an access level;

15 a message recipient;

a line style; and

a line color.

20 36. The system of claim 33 in which the text parameter is associated with at least one of:

a session description;

a conference start date;

a start time;

an end time;

25 a participant identification;

a conference session purpose;

a message subject description; and  
a message text.

37. The system of claim 33 in which the authorization parameter is associated with  
5 updating a whiteboard page.

38. The system of claim 33 in which the graphical parameter is associated with a  
markup to a whiteboard page.

10 39. The system of claim 27 or claim 30 in which the sensing device includes a  
marking nib.

40. The system of claim 29 or 30 in which the sensing device contains an  
identification means which imparts a unique identity to the sensing device and identifies  
15 it as being associated with a particular conference participant.

41. The system of claim 27 or claim 30 in which the conferencing form is printed  
on a surface of a surface-defining means and in which the system includes a printer for  
printing the conferencing form on the surface on demand.

20 42. The system of claim 41 in which the printer prints the coded data on the surface  
at the same time as printing the conferencing form on the surface.

43. The system of claim 27 or claim 30 in which the coded data is substantially  
25 invisible in the visible spectrum.

44. The system of claim 27 which includes a database for keeping a retrievable

45. The system of claim 41 in which, to cater for a conferencing form printed on  
5 multiple pages, the printer includes a binding means for binding the pages.

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